

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 16596

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, EG, IS
SUBJ: ISRAELI EXPLORATION/PRODUCTION IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: CAIRO 13094

1. MFA LEGAL AFFAIRS ADVISOR NABIL ELARABY ASKED EMBASSY TO CALL JULY 6 FOR DISCUSSION OF GULF OF SUEZ MATTERS. ELARABY DESCRIBED APPROACHES BY BOTH AMOCO AND DEPARTMENT OFFICERS WHILE HE WAS RECENTLY IN NEW YORK (SPECIAL UNGA SESSION) URGING HIM TO SEEK INTERNATIONAL COURT ACTION IN CASE OF ISRAELI EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION IN SINAI (GAS) AND GULF OF SUEZ (OIL). ELARABY EXPLAINED THAT WHILE THE ODDS ARE THAT INTERNATIONAL COURT ACTION WOULD BE FAVORABLE TO EGYPT, CURRENT STATE OF POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS MAKE SUCH MOVE UNATTRACTIVE AT THIS TIME. HE HAS SO RECOMMENDED TO FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL, WHO APPARENTLY AGREES.

2. ELARABY SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE SITUATION CANNOT BE LEFT AS IT IS. EGYPT MUST PROTECT ITS RIGHTS BY SEEKING FURTHER CONDEMNATION OF ISRAELI ACTIVITIES. ELARABY SAID HE IS PROPOSING TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT HE TAKE MATTER UP WITH SECRETARY VANCE DURING UPCOMING TALKS
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BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL IN LONDON. SPECIFICALLY HE SAID FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD SEEK U. S. SUPPORT FOR RESOLUTION, BASED ON U. S. AND EGYPTIAN LEGAL POSITIONS WHICH WOULD CALL ON ALL STATES AND COMPANIES TO REFRAIN FROM COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL IN EXPLORATION OR PRODUCTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN OCCUPIED SINAI AND GULF OF SUEZ. ELARABY SAID LANGUAGE WOULD BE WORKED OUT WITH U. S.

BEFORE ANY FINAL DECISION IS TAKEN. HE MADE STRONG APPEAL FOR U. S. SUPPORT FOR RESOLUTION AND SAID HE THOUGHT FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD AGREE TO HIS RECOMMENDATION TO RAISE IT IN LONDON. ELARABY ALSO NOTED THAT FORNMIN HAD MENTIONED PROSPECT TO UNSYG WALDHEIM.

3. COMMENT: EGYPTIANS ARE PROCEEDING CAUTIOUSLY ON GULF OF SUEZ. ON ONE HAND, THEY DO NOT WANT TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM POLITICAL TALKS BY RAISING CONTENTIOUS ISSUE AT INTERNATIONAL COURT. ON OTHER, THEY CLEARLY FEEL THAT SOME FURTHER INTERNATIONAL DEMONSTRATION OF DISAPPROVAL OF ISRAELI ACTIVITIES IS NECESSARY IN ORDER PROTECT EGYPTIAN INTERESTS. AS ELARABY MENTIONED, EGYPTIANS CAN BE EXPECTED CONSULT CLOSELY WITH US IN ORDER ASSURE U.S. SUPPORT FOR RESOLUTION ON THIS SENSITIVE ISSUE.

4. REGARDING ISRAELI ACTIVITIES, GUPCO GENERAL MANAGER WILKIE INFORMED US JULY 6 THAT ISRAELI RIG HAS NOW BEEN LOCATED ONE MILE NORTHEAST OF ALMA PLATFORM. NEW WELL HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN SPUDDED (ASSUME THIS IS NEW ADDITION TO WELL MENTIONED TEL AVIV 7968). WILKIE SAID THAT LOCATION LOOKS LIKE "STEP OUT" IN FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ALMA FIELD AND NOT NEW EXPLORATION. HE DID REPORT, HOWEVER, THAT AMOCO HAS INFORMATION THAT ISRAELIS PLAN RING SECOND RIG INTO SOUTHERN GULF AREA FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION VERY SOON (SEE TEL AVIV 6534).
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